

ENERGY NEWS

From the Iowa Department of Natural Resources
March/April 2002

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Editor's Note: Iowa Energy Plan Now Available in Print

Thanks to funding from the U.S. Department of Energy, the *2002 Comprehensive Energy Plan Update* is now available in print. This biennial report provides an overview of Iowa's energy trends, the results of energy programs in the state, and policy recommendations for effective energy management in the future.

Additionally, the DNR is providing a new, electronic format of the Data Addendum on a CD containing PDF files of the publishable document, and excel files of data used to create charts.

For additional copies of the plan or for the CD of the data addendum, please contact Julie Tack at (515) 281-8665; e-mail: Julie.Tack@dnr.state.ia.us. Or obtain electronic copies of both these documents at the Web site: www.state.ia.us/dnr/energy

Iowa Utilities Board Approves MidAmerican Net Billing Tariff

The Iowa Utilities Board has approved a tariff for net billing arrangements between MidAmerican Energy and its customers. The tariff goes into effect April 24.

In its March 8 order, the Iowa Utilities Board approved MidAmerican Energy's tariff that net billing arrangements be for facilities with 500 kW of nameplate capacity or less. A facility with larger than 500 kW can designate up to that amount as a net-billed facility, with the remainder subject to standard federal regulatory contracts or purchase agreements. MidAmerican's tariff also provides for carry-forward of net billing credits, addresses interconnection costs and standards, and establishes timeframes for processing net billing applications.

The net billing tariff was filed by MidAmerican Energy on Sept. 24, 2001 as part of a settlement arrangement between the utility company and the Consumer Advocate Division of the Dept. of Justice to resolve pending net billing litigation.

For more information, contact Kevin Waetke at MidAmerican Energy at (515) 281-2785.

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Federal Wind Energy Tax Credit Extended

Pres. Bush and the U.S. Congress have extended the federal wind energy tax credit for two more years. The credit provides a 1.5 cent-per-kWh tax credit for electricity generated with wind turbines. The tax credit, which expired Dec. 31, 2001, will be extended retroactively from that date to Dec. 31, 2003.

Extension of the tax credit comes after a year of record-breaking installation of new wind energy capacity in the United States. In 2001, almost 1,700 MW of new wind capacity was installed across the country, more than doubling any previous year's installations. The state of Texas alone accounted for 915 MW of new capacity in 2001. Iowa's wind energy capacity grew to 335 MW in 2001 with the addition of the 80 MW Top of Iowa Wind Farm in Worth County.

For more information about wind energy, contact Lori McDaniel at (515) 281-8094; e-mail: Lori.McDaniel@dnr.state.ia.us

Minnesota Mandates 2 Percent Biodiesel by 2005

On March 18 Minnesota became the first state in the nation to require all diesel fuel sold there to consist of 2 percent biodiesel, a soy oil additive that reduces air pollution. The law will go into effect no later than June 30.

According to the Minnesota Soybean Association, the 2 percent requirement will use more than 11 million bushels of soybeans per year. The law provides an exemption for diesel engines used at nuclear power plants, railroads and off-road diesel engines in copper and taconite mining and logging. There is also a provision to reimburse fuel distributors for capital expenditures made should the state vote to rescind biodiesel within eight years of enactment.

Diesel blended with 2 percent biodiesel can be used in all existing diesel engines, with no engine modifications or problems to engine performance. According to the National Biodiesel Board, a 2 percent blend of biodiesel greatly increases lubricity, which can reduce equipment wear and premature breakdown.

Minnesota also requires all gasoline sold in the state to be a 10 percent-ethanol blend, the only state to have the ethanol fuel requirement standard.

For more information on biodiesel, contact Jennifer Moehlmann at the Iowa DNR at (515) 281-8518 or Jennifer.Moehlmann@dnr.state.ia.us

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DNR Hosts Free Energy Workshop in Sioux City, Cedar Rapids

A free, one-day workshop teaching economic opportunities of energy efficiency for Iowa communities is scheduled for April 24 in Sioux City and will repeat on June 12 in Cedar Rapids.

The workshop will feature experts from utilities, financial consulting companies, construction companies, and the Iowa DNR, and will share success stories from communities that have implemented energy-saving technologies. Attendees will learn opportunities for cost-saving energy efficiency improvements, including how to get financial and technical assistance.

The workshops are presented by the Iowa DNR and sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of Energy, MidAmerican Energy, Alliant Energy and Central Iowa Power Cooperative.

The conference will take place at the Sioux City Convention Center in Sioux City on April 24, and at the Crown Plaza Five Seasons Hotel in Cedar Rapids on June 12. Community leaders, local government officials, school decision makers, facility managers and the general public are encouraged to attend.

For more information contact Chad Stobbe at (515) 242-5851; e-mail: Chad.Stobbe@dnr.state.ia.us. Or go to the Web site: www.state.ia.us/dnr/energy/events

Iowa to Host National Building Energy Code Workshop

The 2002 National Workshop on State Building Energy Codes will bring building officials and experts from across the country to Des Moines, July 15-18, 2001.

The four-day conference will provide an opportunity to learn the latest developments in policy, adoption, advocacy and enforcement of building energy codes. Architects, engineers, building code officials, utilities, insurance industry professionals, and others are invited to attend this important national event. The conference is hosted by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Department of Energy.

For more information, contact Craig Stark at the Iowa DNR at (515) 281-4739; e-mail Craig.Stark@dnr.state.ia.us. Or go to the Web site: www.state.ia.us/dnr/energy/events

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Polk County to Improve Energy Efficiency through DNR Rebuild Program

Polk County will save thousands of dollars while improving its government buildings by joining Rebuild Iowa, a DNR program that helps communities focus on energy efficiency improvements. County supervisors signed a one-year agreement to participate in the program on Feb. 5.

As part of its agreement with the DNR, Polk County plans to implement at least \$300,000 in energy efficiency improvements in the first year of the program, saving taxpayers \$75,000 annually in energy costs.

According to Monica Stone, head of the DNR's buildings programs, Polk County will be able to cut energy consumption by up to 15 percent while enhancing comfort and lighting levels.

"Rebuild Iowa offers an excellent opportunity for local governments to reduce costs while doing something good for their buildings and the environment," said Stone. "Under today's government budget challenges, energy efficiency is an immediate solution for alleviating financial concerns."

The DNR anticipates that Polk County will participate in Rebuild Iowa for three years, focusing on county-owned buildings and the new Polk County Events Center in the initial year, and then expanding to other public buildings and nonprofit organizations. Funds from Rebuild Iowa and the DNR's Solid Waste Alternatives program will be used to hire a county resource manager to focus on helping the county save energy and reduce waste going to landfills.

Rebuild Iowa, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, began in 1996 to help communities identify, implement and finance energy efficiency improvements using local resources. Since it began, more than \$2.6 million has been saved in 13 Iowa communities.

For further information contact Rebecca Spiess, Rebuild Iowa Coordinator, at (515) 281-5007; e-mail: Rebecca.Spiess@dnr.state.ia.us

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From the Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Iowa Low-Income Energy Programs Receive \$5 Million

On March 19 the U.S. Dept. of Energy announced it will award Iowa \$5,051,761 in funding for low-income energy efficiency and weatherization efforts. The funding will be administered by Iowa's Department of Human Rights.

According to the Dept. of Energy, Iowa has received more than \$11 million in weatherization funds during the last three years. Funding is used to help low-income households with energy-saving measures such as improved insulation, servicing heating and cooling systems, reduce air infiltration and more.

For more information, contact Jim Newton with the Iowa Department of Human Rights at (515) 242-6314; e-mail: Jim.Newton@dhr.state.ia.us